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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a study in which Welsh's A and R scale scores have been related to religiousness. The A factor has been defined as "anxiety proneness versus ego resiliency" while the R factor is defined as "impulsivity versus control." Subjects were 150 college students, 91 females and 59 males. The sole statistical technique utilized was canonical correlation, which yields both a univariate and a multivariate correlational matrix. Results support the speculation that religiousness and lowered anxiety and heightened repression (control) are more strongly related in males than in females. Implication of the findings both for personality (adolescent) theory and further research are briefly discussed. It appears that the religious dimension most highly correlated with A and R, in females as well as males, is the phenomenological dimension of Nearness to God. (Author/PFS)

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A NOTE ON ANXIETY, REPRESSION, AND RELIGIOUSNESS IN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Wiggins (1969) maintains that there exists widespread agreement on the dimensionality of the MMPI. He writes:

> "When the intercorrelations of MMPI clinical scales are factored, two substantial factors emerge which account for the vast majority of common variance. These factors are consistently marked by Welsh's A and R respectively. . . (p. 158)."

Later, Wiggins (1969, pages 162 and 163) characterizes the A factor as "anxiety proneness versus ego resiliency" and the R factor as "impulsivity versus control."

While the MMPI clinical scales have been frequently utilized in research on the personality/psychopathological characteristics associated with religiousness (Richek, 1971), as far as is known, there have been no studies utilizing these factorially derived MMPI scales (A and R). The primary purpose of this brief note is to report the results of both a univariate and multivariate statistical analysis of data obtained from college students (chronological ages 18-20).

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

From 59 males and 91 females (freshmen and sophomores), MMPI protocols were initially scored for the validity (L, F, and K) scales and also for the clinical scales (hypochondriasis, depression, psychopathic deviate, hysteria, paranoia, schizophrenia, mania, social introversion). Later, the protocols were rescored for the items subsumed under R (repression, i.e., impulsivity versus control) and A (anxiety proneness versus ego resiliency). Incidentally,

high As and high Rs indicate high anxiety proneness and high control respectively; thus, a raw score of 37 yields -- for males -- a T score of 81 for A and 95 for R. For females, a raw score of 37 yields T scores of 76 and 95 (A and R respectively).

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF RELIGIOUSNESS

The construct of religiousness is certainly multidimensional (Richek, 1971). Utilized in this investigation were Broen's (1955) factorially derived scales. While these scales are old (Broen constructed the instrument which bears his name over 20 years ago), one of the scales is -- in the experience of the investigator -- quite heuristic. Scale I of the Broen inventory is entitled "Nearness to God," with a high score indicating that the respondents "feel" that God is "real," "near," and "constantly accessible." Scale II of the Broen inventory is called "Fundamentalism/ Humanitarianism." Phrased perhaps too simplistically, a high scorer on Scale II may be categorized as viewing the Deity as wrathful of sinful man while a low scorer adheres to "humanistic" religious beliefs.

A third measure of religiousness used in this study was the Mayo Religious Authoritarianism Scale (Mayo, 1966). The MRAS (acronym for the Mayo Religious Authoritarianism Scale) consists of 20 items, is unidimensional, and provides an index of beliefs vis-a-vis God as a punishing Deity. The MRAS is so constructed that a low score indicates high religious authoritarianism while a high score indicates a respondent who is nonauthoritarian in the religious domain. The MRAS does not measure the same concept

as Broen's Scale II -- while the correlation coefficient is high, i.e., usually about -.65 to -.70, the coefficient of determination (r^2) only accounts for, at most, 49 percent of the variance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table I about here

Since the A and R scores had not been converted to T scores, it was not possible to combine males and females; hence, the data for males and females were analyzed separately. The canonical correlation computer program utilized was that which appears in Veldman's (1967) book, FORTRAN Programming for the Behavioral Sciences. This program yields means, sigmas, and univariate correlational matrices as well as canonical roots. There is extant a controversy regarding the interpretation of canonical roots; Nicewander at the University of Oklahoma, who has written regarding canonical analyses, has in a personal communication advised the investigator that the first canonical function extracted may be interpreted in a straightforward fashion. The purpose of canonical correlation is, of course, to maximize the correlation between two sets of variables -- in the present study, between two MMPI variables (A and R) and three indices of religiousness.

FEMALES

As will be noted from Table 1, R and A scores for females are orthogonal, i.e., the Pearson Product Moment r is .04, which with

89 df is not statistically significant. In fact, in the univariate matrix, only the r (-.22) between Nearness to God and Impulsivity/ Control is statistically significant. There were extracted two canonical roots which are not tabled since neither was significant.

MALES

The results for the 59 males demonstrate the value of the canonical correlation technique -- maximizing the relationship between two sets of variables. Note that the three religious and two MMPI variables yield only one statistically significant univariate r, i.e., Nearness to God and Anxiety (A) are inversely related ($r = -.31$, $p < .05$). But the first canonical variate is statistically significant ($p = .018$), and two of the three religious variables load highly on this variate (Nearness to God = -.735 and MRAS = .57); on the R and A side, R loads .71, and A has .56 loading. This finding may be interpreted as indicating that Nearness to God and also religious authoritarianism are inversely associated with both high anxiety and with high repression scores. (The reader will recall that a low MRAS score signifies high religious authoritarianism while a high MRAS means low religious authoritarianism.)

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study support the hypothesis that religiousness in late adolescent American males has differing personality concomitants from those of late adolescent females

(Richek et. al., 1970, Richek, 1971). In this study (as in others), the dimension "Nearness to God" is -- in adolescent American males -- a characteristic found to be associated with positive mental health. For females, Nearness to God seems to bear at best a weak relationship to personality/mental health characteristics. How may this sex difference be interpreted? Anna Freud (1958) and Blos (1962) regard the psychic usefulness of religiousness in adolescence to be an "orienting" phenomenon. Given the conditions of contemporary American society, is religiousness more psychically useful to American adolescent males than it is to females because (in psychoanalytic terminology) adolescence for males is a more ego-dystonic period than it is for females?

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TABLE 1
Univariate and Canonical Correlational Analyses:
91 Females and 59 Males

FEMALES	Repression	Anxiety
Nearness to God	-.223*	.090
Fundamentalism/Humanism	-.086	.05
Religious Authoritarianism (MRAS)	.053	-.014

*p < .05
Note: Canonical variate extracted was not statistically significant and is not tabled.

MALES	Repression	Anxiety
Nearness to God	0.123	-.314*
Fundamentalism/Humanism	.169	.173
Religious Authoritarianism (MRAS)	.08	.162

*p < .05

Religious Variables	One Significant Canonical Variate (prob = .018)
Nearness to God	-.735**
Fundamentalism/Humanism	.04
Religious Authoritarianism (MRAS)	.41**
R and A Variables	
Repression	.714**
Anxiety	.567**

**Cooley and Lohnes (1971) consider loadings less than .30 as "trivial." Please note that four of the five correlations are greater than .30.

ABSTRACT

According to most MMPI authorities, two factors account for the vast majority of common variance in the MMPI clinical scales: Welsh's A and R. The A factor has been defined as "anxiety proneness versus ego resiliency while the R factor is defined as "impulsivity versus control." Scores on ten MMPI clinical scales have been frequently used in the empirical research on the personality/psychopathological characteristics associated with religiousness; as far as is known, however, there have been no studies in which A and R scale scores have been related to religiousness. Subjects were 150 college students, 91 females and 59 males. The sole statistical technique utilized was canonical corrleation which yields both a univariate and multivariate correlational matrix. Results support the speculation that religiousness and lowered anxiety and heightened repression (control) are more strongly related in males than in females. Implications of the findings both for personality (adolescent) theory and further research are briefly discussed. It is interesting to note that the religious dimension most highly correlated with A and R -- both in females as well as males -- is a phenomenological dimension, i.e. Nearness to God.